

**Abstract of the Disclosure**

For clamping a reticle within a lithography system, a first area in the center of the reticle is clamped to a chuck of the lithography system at a first time point. In addition, a second area toward an outer perimeter of the reticle is clamped to the chuck at a second  
5 time point after the first time point such that the reticle is flattened against the chuck.

With such flattening of the reticle, image placement error on a semiconductor substrate is minimized.